whether there is a shortage of pilots in the Indian Civil Aviation sector;

if so, the details thereof;

the total requirement of pilots by Civil Aviation sector and how Government proposes to meet the requirements;

whether the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has invited foreign pilots to work for Indian Civil Aviation sector; and

if so, the details thereof?

THE MINTSTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Civil aviation Industry in the country is facing a shortage of approximately 1000 type rated pilots.

With the present growth of the aviation industry, it has been estimated that in the next five years, 5000 additional pilots would be required for scheduled operations and 1000 pilots for non-scheduled and private operations. The Government has taken various steps to reduce the gap between demand and supply of skilled Indian pilots. These include increasing the age-limit of 65 years for pilots, upgradation and modernisation of training infrastructure of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) to enhance its training capacity from 40 to 100 pilots per year and reduce (he training period, setting up of a world class flying training institute at Gondia, Maharashtra for training 100 cadets and assistance to flying clubs by allocating trainer aircraft through Directorate General of Civil Aviation/Aero Club of India.

and (e) No, Sir. The foreign pilots are employed by the airlines. Directorate General of Civil Aviation only validates the foreign licence as per rules.

Facilities for physically challenged air-passengers

*512. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

whether Indian carriers are opposing the decision to provide mandatory free facilities to physically challenged passengers;

if so, whether the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), which had earlier proposed this in a draft civil aviation requirement, has re-sent its proposal to the Ministry with the views of Airlines;

if so, whether Government has taken any final decision in this regard; and

if so, whether any directions have been issued to all the Indian carriers to continue the free facilities to the physically challenged passengers?

THE IVflNISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had

prepared a draft Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) for carriage of physically challenged/ persons with disability in consultation with Governmental/non-Governmental organization, Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA) and Airports Authority of India (AAI). The Government has since approved the CAR which will be formally issued by DGCA.

Damand for LPG cylinders

*513. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

the details of total demands received from each State during the current year till now for the supply of LPG cylinders under the Public Distribution System alongwith the quantum of allotment made to each State every month;

the demand received from Gujarat and allotment made to it;

whether the said demands have been totally fulfilled; and

if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (d) There is no system for supply of LPG cylinders under the Public Distribution System in the country. Sale of domestic LPG in the country is regulated under the provisions of the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000 (Control Order) and LPG supply to the distributors are being made by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors. OMCs have reported that they have supplied 9394 and 537 TMTs (Thousand Metric Tonnes) of domestic LPG in the country and in Gujarat respectively during the period April 2007-February 2008. The State-wise and month-wise details for the period April 2007-February 2008 are at the Statement. *(See* below).

OMCs had reported backlog in LPG supplies in certain States in the country, including the State of Gujarat, due to a combination of factors, *viz.,* reduction in supply of bulk LPG compared to the target by Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) and Essar Oil Limited in January-February 2008, delay in movement of bulk LPG by rail from Jamnagar to the Northern Region, increased demand in the States due to severe cold which resulted in panic booking by the customers, strikes by contract labour, agitational activities, delays in berthing of vessels at Haldia Port due to reduced draft, bandhs, etc.

Government had advised OMCs to liquidate the backlog in the country by operating the bottling plants oh holidays and during extended hours. Increased bottling is also done during the working days for early clearance of backlog.

At present, OMCs have not reported any backlog in supply of LPG in the country, including Gujarat. OMCs are monitoring the situation on a day-to-day basis and corrective action is being taken wherever required.